

Hello Legion Family,

My term is ending too soon. The last few weeks have been extremely busy. I have been closely watching the events going on overseas in Ukraine. I hope and pray for an end to this conflict soon.

I am so proud of the entire American Legion Auxiliary Department North Dakota for pitching in with the planning for the visit from our National President Kathy Daudistel. The entire three days of Kathy's stay was filled with visits to some of North Dakota's greatest treasures. Soon after her flight landed in Minot she was on the road to White Shield, home of the Arikara. Young Hawk-Bear Post 253 lead the parade into the Old Scouts Cemetery Post #1 with their eagle staff and flags, followed by members of the North Dakota American Legion Family from across the state.

The Dead Grass drum group sang an honor song and flag song. Prayer was offered by Arikara tribal member Wayne Flute. National President Kathy Daudistel honored the veterans laid to rest in the cemetery by laying a wreath at the entrance. Kathy toured the White Shield Veterans Center where Bernadette White Bear explained the benefits the Mandan Hidatsa & Arikara Nation have to offer our veterans. Next stop was the Arikara Cultural Center where Austin Gillette gave a brief history of the Arikara tribe. The evening meal was prepared and served by Unit 253 Auxiliary members. The Department of North Dakota provided a delicious cake for dessert.

On Sunday, President Kathy traveled north to the International Peace Gardens. Although the famous flower gardens are not yet in bloom, we were able to tour the grounds including the Sunken Garden Fountain, the 9/11 Memorial Site, the Peace Chapel, and the Conservatory, where we were treated to a Mother's Day brunch. A quick visit to Annie's House and Mystic Gardens, North Dakota's Stonehenge, rounded out the visit in the northern part of our state.

On Monday, May 9, our morning began with a tour of the Minot Air Force Base. Thank you, Linda Siewert, of William G. Carroll Unit 26 of Minot for your hard work and planning to make this tour possible. Our tour guide on base was a very pleasant young woman named Abigail. Our visit began with a short film at the Minuteman missile facility training site. We toured a missile silo where we observed a replica of the warhead and launch equipment. We toured one of the trucks that carries missiles from the airbase to the missile sites. Next stop was the training area for the B-52 bomber planes. We learned about the variety of bombs these planes carry and how they are loaded. I was filled with pride to know how well our country is protected, and especially knowing how well the service people who work on the Minot Air Force base are trained and ready to protect us. Thank you to the men and women of the Minot Air Force base.

We were treated to a luncheon at the Armed Forces Reserve Center hosted by Minot Auxiliary Unit 26. I want to thank Gary Siewert, who works at the Armed Forces Center, for his gracious welcome and service. I cannot forget to thank Linda and Gary's daughter and granddaughter for preparing the complex for the luncheon and serving the meal.

I have to say the visit from Kathy Daudistel has been one of the highlights of my term as your Department President. I am looking forward to the Department Convention in Dickinson on June 24-26.

I am proud and honored to have served as your 2021-2022 Department President representing Young Hawk-Bear Unit 253 and the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation.

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Sharon White Bear, Department President